



## Ninestiles School & The Sixth Form College Solihull Academy Council

Minutes of a meeting held on 2 November 2017 at 6.00pm in the Board Room at Ninestiles School.

<b>Members:</b>	Vrigu Dey (Chair)	VD
	Isbaa Akhtar	IA – College student
	Luke Banks	LB
	Jade Beetison	JB – School Student Advocate & AP
	Jazz Edwards (Vice-Chair)	JE – College parent
	Gaetano Ferrante	GF – School Improvement Director
	Adill Hadi	AH
	Sheila Hickfield-Powell	SHP
	Karamat Iqbal	KI
	Adrian Jones	AJ – College staff
	Lesley Long	LL – School staff
	James Power	JP – Interim School Principal
	Khalida Qureshi (Vice-Chair)	KQ – School parent
	Martin Sullivan	MS – Interim College Principal
	Ian Welsh	IW – School parent

**In attendance:** Catherine Anwar (CA), Chief Executive Officer  
Janice Hamilton (JH), College Vice Principal & DSL  
Rucksana Hussain (Clerk)

**Apologies:** none

**Absent:** Sajad Akram (SA) College parent, Luke Millard (LM)

### **1 Welcome and introductions**

The Chair, VD, welcomed the Councillors to the meeting and outlined the purpose of Academy Councils: to hold schools/college and leaders to account for the progress and achievement of students and to monitor the school/college improvement plans to ensure that this happens. VD noted that the Council now monitors two organisations, and encouraged all those present to ask questions and involve themselves in both school and college.

CA gave the Council information about the new Progress & Standards Panels now in place. Full information about the purposes of panels can be found on the Trust website and in the minutes of the first Board meeting of this year. Panels, chaired by the CEO and attended by the Chair of the Academy Council, Principals and the relevant SID (School Improvement Director) scrutinise and challenge the achievement of students in the schools/college and hold leaders to account for their work to raise standards. Panels will now be the forum for this deep scrutiny of performance data, with headlines provided to Academy Councils alongside the notes from Panel meetings. For this meeting, the Panel notes are not yet ready: they will

be uploaded on to the school/college websites in due course. KI commented that it was difficult to match the papers provided to the agenda items.

**Action:** *to provide better signposting of papers to the agenda for future meetings.*

## **2 Minutes and Matters Arising**

As this was the first meeting, there were no minutes or matters arising.

## **3 Elections**

Vice-Chair: Jazz Edwards (JE) was elected (proposed by SHP, seconded by LB). A second Vice-Chair was also elected to ensure coverage and representation from both organisations: Khalida Qureshi (KQ), proposed by LB and seconded by VD. CA gave brief explanations of the roles of SEND Lead Councillor, Safeguarding Lead Councillor and Disadvantaged Pupils Lead Councillor. The following appointments were agreed

<u>SEND Lead Councillor:</u>	Khalida Qureshi (KQ)
<u>Safeguarding Lead Councillor:</u>	Lesley Long (LL)
<u>Disadvantaged Pupils Lead Councillor:</u>	Adill Hadi (AH)

## **4 AC Delegated Responsibilities**

VD outlined these in further detail. He noted that the Academy Council will review the school/college improvement plans (SIP), and the school self-evaluation form (SEF) and college SAR. These reviews will check the actions and milestones against the students' most recent achievement data to see what difference leaders are making to standards in the school/college. CA encouraged Councillors to ask questions of leaders. VD noted that it was important for Councillors to visit the school/college and to meet with staff and the Principals. Visits should have a specific focus, and this should be agreed in advance with Principals. There is a formal note of visit form which should be completed – this will be very helpful to the Council as a record of AC involvement with the school/college, and to Principals in terms of monitoring outcomes.

## **5 Outcomes and Achievement**

### **5.1 Ninestiles School**

JP gave an overview of outcomes for Ninestiles Year 11 2017 and Key Stage 3 students. Progress 8 (the national measure of how much progress students make in GCSEs) was -0.06. A score of below zero is below average. Although there has been a slight improvement on the previous year, Ninestiles progress is not as good as we would like it to be. JP explained that the progress students make is measured from their Key Stage 2 scores at the end of year 6. He noted that the disadvantaged students did not make as good progress as other students in the year group and that the gap between their progress and that of other students nationally (and in school) had widened. This was particularly true of the boys. Maths and English both saw a negative progress score.

IW asked how teachers had coped with the new grading system at GCSE. JP responded that this had been a challenge, and exam boards had provided very little information to help teachers with predicting grades.

KQ questioned the outcomes in Maths and noted that she recalled discussing some issues in this subject at the previous Academy Council meeting. She asked how the school is addressing this. JP responded that the school has a rapid improvement plan in place to develop stronger teaching. He and the senior team are monitoring standards more robustly to ensure that support is provided where needed, and that expectations are high enough. JP outlined the use of evidence-based research to support effective intervention for students. He highlighted a lack of consistency in feedback to students as a barrier to them making rapid progress. Teachers are being supported in school and by the Trust as a whole.

IW asked if there had been a decline in 2017 results. CA responded that although gaps between groups of students have widened, the decline has been stemmed and the school is now in a good position to shift standards upwards. JD outlined the positive ethos and the strength and determination of staff to move things forward. VD welcomed this, and encouraged Councillors to provide positive support to the school.

JE asked how much contact Councillors are expected to have with the school. CA responded that this depends on Councillors' availability: as much as they are able, in school/college hours, in order to see the school/college at work. Councillors are advised to touch base with Principals to plan a visit to tailor this to their area of expertise, and to an area useful for the school/college. Parents' evenings are useful occasions to gather parents' views as this is a key aspect of the Academy Council's work. Councillors were encouraged to visit the school/college that they are least familiar with to learn more about them. The Councillor visit form will be placed on the Trust website.

JP outlined some of the key areas of the school improvement plan, for example a review of performance management systems to ensure that staff are appropriately held to account for their impact on student progress. JP outlined how leaders have supported line managers through coaching and training to hold effective line management meetings. Progress with actions on the development plan will be revisited in the next Academy Council meeting.

**Action:** *to place the Councillor/Trustee visit form on the Trust website.*

**Action:** *at the suggestion of CA, to provide a glossary of key terminology for the school and college, for the Academy Councillors, to facilitate understanding.*

## 5.2 The Sixth Form College, Solihull

MS referred Councillors to the information pack sent out with the papers, highlighting the key College priorities for 2017/18 and the detailed outcomes information. In particular, he referenced strong performance in BTEC qualifications, and some

under performance for high achieving students and in Maths and Physics. The new linear A level courses have had an impact on outcomes. There were significant differences in how students needed to answer the questions to gain high marks.

VD asked if teacher predictions had been accurate. MS responded that this was not the case in one area, but that predictions had on the whole been fairly accurate. These issues are being addressed. KQ asked about the SEND outcomes and MS said that SEND students were performing in line with their peers.

**Action:** *MS to provide SEND outcomes to the next meeting of Academy Council.*

## **6 Self-Evaluation**

### **6.1 College**

MS advised the meeting that the college SAR has to be submitted to Ofsted and that in this aspect it differed from the school SEF. The college SAR will be reviewed by the CEO and Academy Council's Chair and Vice-Chairs on 5 December 2017. MS referred to the contextual SAR document which gives a good overview of the make-up of the student body at the College and how it has changed in recent years.

**Action:** *to invite VD, JQ and JE to the meeting on 5 December 2017.*

KI reflected that the analysis of ethnic heritage of students is interesting and asked if this was reflected in the staff backgrounds. MS reported that it was not, though progress continues to be made. A discussion about the recruitment of a diverse staff followed. CA agreed that the promotion and celebration of diversity is a key part of the Trust ethos. Reports on staffing go directly to the Board of Trustees.

### **6.2 School**

JP advised that he and the senior team have worked on the SEF to reflect on progress over the previous year. Councillors raised the issue of homework and how disadvantaged students fared in terms of having the right conditions to complete homework well. JP responded that this is an area the school is currently reviewing.

## **7 Safeguarding**

The college had recently been audited by SMBC (Solihull Metropolitan Borough Council) with one minor recommendation. The college is due an external safeguarding review in February 2018 from the same consultant used for all of the schools in the Trust. Ninestiles external review is very positive with few areas of development – these will be discussed fully at the next Academy Council meeting.

**Action:** *agenda for next meetings to include external reviews of safeguarding.*

## **8 SEND Reports**

These were reviewed by the Academy Council. Councillors requested progress information for the SEND students.

MS reported that the study plus team at the college is very effective. The college has the Dyslexia and Autism quality marks. MS explained that SEND government funding had been cut significantly nationally with the amount allocated to the College plummeting from £300,000 to £12,000. The focus had therefore shifted to Quality First teaching, and the need to ensure that students develop independence during their two years at college to improve their resilience in the future. There are three students on EHCPs (Education, Health and Care Plans). Providing support and guidance for the ever increasing number of young people presenting with mental health issues is a high priority at the college and in the school.

**Action:** *information about progress of SEND students to come to next Council meeting.*

## **9 Review of School and College Websites**

A request was made for volunteers to check the college and school websites for legal compliance.

**Action:** *that a list of checks required would be drawn up for the next meeting in order to progress this.*

## **10 Note for future meetings**

The minutes of the meeting reflect the order of the discussion at the meeting rather than the template agenda.

## **11 Determination of confidential items**

**Agreed:** there were no confidential items.

## **12 Date of next meeting**

Tuesday 16 January 2018 at 6.00pm at The Sixth Form College, Solihull in the Board Room.